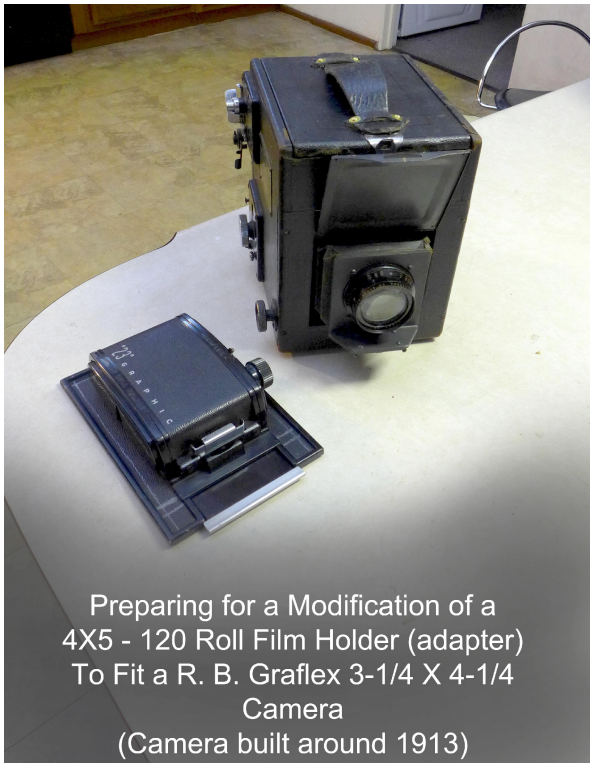
A Modification of a 4X5 Inch - 120 Roll Film Holder/Adapter To Fit a R. B. Graflex 3-1/4 X 4-1/4 Inch Camera (*Cerca - 1913*)

By James R. Kyle, Photographer

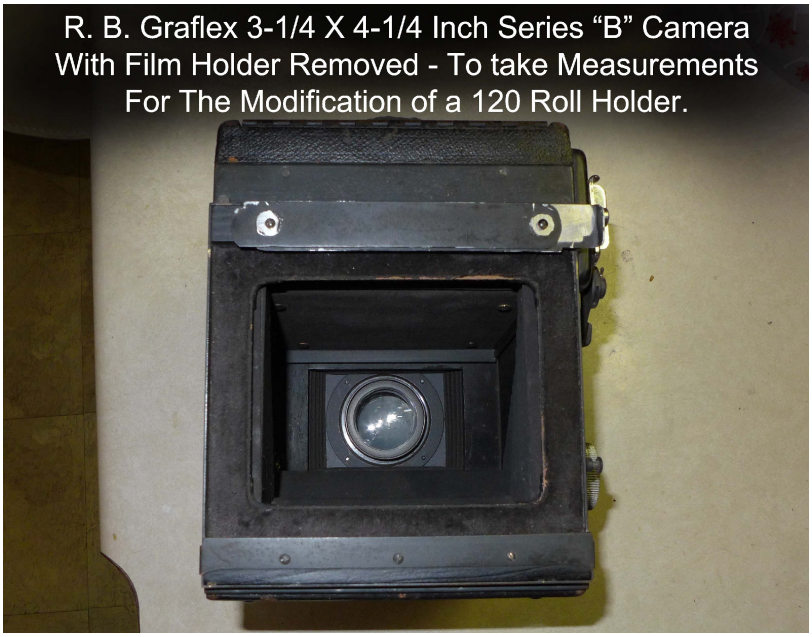
Having three Graflex “Series B” cameras, in my working collection, I wanted one that would accept a 120 Roll Film Holder. However - Without the modification of the body of the camera. (I respect things that are over 108 Years of Age and still in working condition.) I knew that 120 Roll Film Holders for this Graflex do exist - However - they are very, VERY, difficult to acquire and are quite costly. I had bought the 4X5 inch 120 adapter some years ago on e-Bay for under twenty dollars, so, I did not mind “Cutting” into it to make the change. I did, however, did not wish to do anything “unusual” to the Graflex camera body proper. (Or rather, Improper.) I took measurements of the back of the camera, where the film holders attach, and marked in pencil lines where I intended to cut-down the 120 roll holder to fit.

Selecting a fine tooth blade (for metal) for the reciprocating saber-saw to do the cut of the roll holder. Moving the saw forward, very slow of travel speed, the control of the cut is certain. After the cut with the saw, I smoothed down and squared the corners to fit exactly the area for where the film holders are kelp at the rear of the camera. This area, of the camera, is revised about 1/8th of an inch, as to prevent ambient light from “fogging” the film. The camera has a “swivel-back” whereby the photographer may use the camera in horizontal and vertical positions. (Take note that the 120 roll holder is indeed NOT a “square format”. It is a true rectangle.)

This little project was not only fun to try and make the Graflex use 120 Roll Film, but, indeed, practical. I know that I would never make use of the 4X5 Roll Holder again in a 4X5 camera, and that is OK with me. Besides - as one fellow photographer said to me once - “Using a 120 roll holder defeats the purpose of a 4X5 camera.” = And she is correct. However - Now - I have a 1913 camera to use and the 120 film format really is not that much smaller than the 3-1/4 X 4-1/4 Inch images that the Graflex was designed for.



Preparing for a Modification of a 4X5 - 120 Roll Film Holder (adapter) To Fit a R. B. Graflex 3-1/4 X 4-1/4 Camera (Camera built around 1913)



R. B. Graflex 3-1/4 X 4-1/4 Inch Series “B” Camera With Film Holder Removed - To take Measurements For The Modification of a 120 Roll Holder.

4X5 Inch 120 Roll Film Holder
Needed to Cut-Down to Fit a
R. B. Graflex Series - “B” 4X5 Camera
Needs to be Cut-Down.

120 Roll Holder - With Marked Line For Removal
of Edges. To Fit Graflex Series “B” Back

After Careful Measurements of The 4X5 Inch Holder
Make The Cuts And File Down to Fit Exactly The
3-1/4 X 4-1/4 Inch Back of The Camera

Sliding The 120 Holder Into Proper Position
Onto The R. B. Graflex “Series B” Back

Checking a True Fitting Into The Holder Slot and
Keeper - Locked Into Position

- Finished -
And
Ready to load with 120 Roll Film

-- One More Thing --
The Swivel Back Can Still Be Used
To Make Vertical Images

The next thing to do would be test the camera for proper alignment in order to make “Marks” on the ground glass of the “viewing area”, because the area of capturing images would be less. As well as to detect any light leaks from the Holder Area and that of the Bellows Focusing System (as I have never made true film negative with this camera). I have used it in some paper negative experiments, but not something as sensitive as film. Also the shutter timing of various speeds. (I have only used the “T” mode of the “shutter” - which is the mirror in the case of “Timed Exposures”). So, that test would be three-fold.

- End -

James R. Kyle, Photographer - Saint Louis, Missouri - Feb. 2020